

IN THE CLAIMS

1-6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 12, wherein the sample tested is human urine.

8-10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) The kit of Claim 13, ~~containing, additionally, wherein said charcoal is~~ dextran coated charcoal.

12. (Currently Amended) A method of determining specific 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ binding activity in a urine sample comprising the steps of:

(1) adding a known amount of radiolabeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ to two or more identical samples of urine from an individual and a known amount of excess unlabeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ to half of the samples to compete with the radiolabeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ for binding proteins in the urine;

(2) incubating all samples prepared in step (1) to allow radiolabeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ binding to proteins in the urine;

(3) incubating samples prepared in step (2) in buffered dextran-coated charcoal, then centrifuging to precipitate the unbound radio labeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃;

(4) measuring the average radioactivity in the supernatant of each sample of step (3);

(5) comparing the average radioactivity in the samples containing excess unlabeled 25-hydroxy vitamin D₃ with those to which no unlabeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ had been added to determine 25-hydroxyvitamin D binding proteins in the urine sample, ~~with the excess amount of binding in samples which lacked the unlabeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ acting as a standard for~~

~~amount of hydroxyl vitamin D binding in samples to which 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ has not been added wherein increased binding~~ an excess of average radioactivity in the samples which lacked unlabeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃, over the average radioactivity of samples which contain excess unlabeled 25-hydroxy vitamin D₃ is deemed indicative of ~~excess 25-hydroxyvitamin D binding~~ 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ binding activity in the urine sample,

wherein a higher-than-normal 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ binding activity in the urine is deemed indicative of salt sensitivity or predisposition to salt-associated hypertension.

13. (Currently Amended) A test kit comprising:

radiolabeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃[[.]];

unlabeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃; and

charcoal,

~~but no~~ wherein said kit does not contain antibodies.

14. (New) A method for determining salt sensitivity in an individual. comprising:

(1) adding a known amount of radiolabeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ to a first aliquot of a urine sample from an individual and to a second aliquot of the same urine sample, and adding a known amount of unlabeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ to the first aliquot;

(2) incubating the first and the second aliquots prepared in step (1) to allow radiolabeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ binding to proteins in the urine;

(3) precipitating the unbound radio labeled 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃;

(4) measuring the radioactivity in the supernatant of each aliquot of step (3);

(5) comparing the radioactivity in the first aliquot with the radioactivity in the second aliquot, wherein an excess of radioactivity in the second aliquot over the radioactivity in the first aliquot is deemed indicative of 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ binding activity in the urine sample,

wherein a higher-than-normal 25-hydroxyvitamin D₃ binding activity in the urine is indicative of salt sensitivity or predisposition to salt-associated hypertension.